Redrawing East Harlem

Architecture Studio Description

In this design studio, students will examine four distinct building types: office, housing, cultural, and health, all of which have a direct design relationship to architecture, building, urban, preservation, development, and infrastructure. The studio begins by questioning typology and its relationship and representation to the contemporary city. For instance, housing and office buildings are, by their very nature, examples of generic building types. Some may argue that working within a particular typology produces boring buildings. However, it is precisely the thorough understanding of an individual type and by extension the potential for multiple typologies (think housing) that allows one to understand what has motivated the peculiarities of a particular building. The specificities of urban context, such as New York City's East Harlem, the baseline of this studio, produce unexpected moments that alter type's original form and program potential. With the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan's rezoning proposal put out in December 2016, this studio will examine types of buildings and life within this neighborhood. The studio literally asks student(s) to redraw all scales of East Harlem. The studio will emphasize drawing over other mediums. The studio also asks each student to think what it means to redraw.

The question of type, once a beginning and end for architecture, today, is less clear, and even less relevant in making architecture and an argument for the making of a city. At least the studio will question this idea. How does the city intervene in the design of a building? What constraints or alterations are reflected in the design of a project, and in its ultimate form and program? In Aldo Rossi’s *The Architecture of the City*, he describes how “American architecture is above all ‘the architecture of the city’: primary elements, monuments, parts. Specifically, New York is a city of monuments such as I did not believe could exist.” (Rossi, pg. 15). If there are monuments, how does it differ from type? Does an urban context make the difference between a type and a monument? If type is generic, or concerned with the general, and architecture is seen as having the quality of luxury, then how do these two things meet? We will examine the distinction between pure expressions of type, and cases in which a type is altered by the city. Through a series of lectures, reading and discussion, and site visits, this studio will focus on select types, looking at works of architecture, both iconic and mundane. Students will be asked to work across a variety of scales. This studio brief asks students to look at and work with type, but first there needs to be understanding of how type fits into the city, and this begins with understanding and identifying urban morphology, lots lines, property lines, and urban history. On the recent occasion of the 100th anniversary of the 1916 New York City Zoning Ordinance, the first zoning laws passed in the United States, students will learn about the importance of this act, but also questions is relevance today. And particularly look at this subject as part of the City's proposed rezoning and reworking of two neighborhoods in East Harlem that will be the site of the studio.

To begin, students will undertake a twofold process: first is to undertake design research, complete a site visit, and develop original drawings and representations of the studio site. The second is to design a quadrant of the city, in this case a neighborhood in the East Harlem. Located between East 96th Street and West 143rd Street on the south and north sides respectively, from, 5th Avenue to the East River (FDR Drive) and Harlem River Drive. Within this area, existing types include a former school, warehouse, a community college, park, storage, subway station and platforms,
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gas station, car wash, etc… East Harlem is one of New York City’s most important, yet underdeveloped and overdeveloped with NYCHA housing neighborhoods. The studio should look at the history of the East Harlem and its development. All of these will influence a reading of the city and its relationship to type, architecture, and design.

References and Readings: (See Schedule below for specific readings)

Types to be explored will include examples located in New York City, Philadelphia, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Mexico City, Berlin, among others. Architects to be included SANAA, Venturi Scott Brown, Alison and Peter Smithson, Lina Bo Bardi, Louis Kahn, Rem Koolhaas, O.M. Ungers, among others. Select readings will accompany studio work. Each week there will be a short discussion around certain readings. Students are expected to select one of the readings each week.
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Studio Project and Requirements

Social and Architectural Aggregates, MOS

Neubau, Germany

The first week each student(s) will select one building to examine in detail and produce a series of diagrams and drawings that illustrate how type is changed by its context, with an emphasis on the city. In addition, each student(s) will select a series of scale figures to examine, and create your own scale figure that will be used to design your project around. The representation of the building is to be made through a detailed drawing that takes a position on what is the contemporary city and how can it be represented. The second assignment is to make a massing diagram drawing and model that proposes redevelopment of the site. The third part of the studio that begins in week 3 is to design one building in detail.

No more than two unexcused absences are permitted. Grades are based on participation (20%) and drawings, models, with statement (80%). A draft of the final drawings will be presented on the last day of class with a guest reviewer(s). A final review will be held in the first week of August, date to be confirmed, and a final PDF should be submitted at the time of the review. Students should produce a series of drawings no larger than 18” x 24” with a total of 9. Drawings should be scaled and include observations of the buildings in their site, climate, structure, and diagrams about type, along with a written statement in the form of long captions. Models should also be considered as part of the presentation and photographed with illustrations. Please see above images for reference of scale of work to be created.
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The community's goal is to build off of the affordability that will be required on private rezoned sites under the pending MHZ policy currently before the City Council (presently requiring unit set asides at 25% affordable housing at 60% AMI, or 50% at 80% AMI.) Per the community response, the Plan also recommends 100% of units to be affordable on public sites.

These efforts combined will enable at least 50% of the new housing on private rezoned and public sites to be affordable at a variety of low- and moderate-income levels.

If approved by NYCHA residents of that development, Infill on NYCHA properties would contribute to the 50% affordability target.
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Studio Site, East Harlem Existing NYCHA projects

NYCHA's General Fund deficit in 2015:
$74M

5-year major capital needs as of 2015:
$17B

Average repair times in all NYCHA developments
December 2014:
28 days*
December 2015:
47 days*

NYCHA Target:
15 days**

Open work orders on NYCHA properties city-wide
December 2014:
103,000
December 2015:
139,000

Image from the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan
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Schedule

Week 1: Jan. 12, Thursday  
First Studio meeting Conversation  
**Housing Types: Social** / Alison and Peter Smithson / Robin Hood Gardens London, UK  
Readings:  
Alison and Peter Smithson. Urban Structuring  
Alison Smithson, Byelaws of Mental Health

Week 2: Jan. 16, Monday  
Studio Desk Crits  
**Type and the City**  
Readings:  
Rem Koolhaas, Delirious New York; Generic City

Jan. 19, Thursday  
Studio Desk Crits

Week 3: Jan. 23, Monday  
Pin Up  
Jan. 26, Thursday  
Studio Desk Crits  
**Housing Types: Social** / Afonso Eduardo Reidy / Pedregulho Housing, Rio de Janeiro, 1958  
Readings:  
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Week 4: Jan. 30, Monday  Pin Up
Feb. 2, Thursday  Desk Crits
Office Types: Corporate Headquarters: Lever House, Union Carbide, Pepsi-co and Seagrams
Readings:

Week 5: Feb. 6, Monday  Pin Up
Feb. 9, Thursday  Desk Crits
Healthy Urban Infrastructures: Roosevelt Island from Ungers to Koolhaas
Readings:
Rem Koolhaas Urbanism after Innocence: Four Projects: The Reinvention of Geometry Assemblage, No. 18 (Aug., 1992), pp. 82-113
Rem Koolhaas in ZONE 1/2, The Contemporary City, ed. Michel Feher and Sanford Kwinter [New York: Zone Books, 1986]

Week 6: Feb. 13, Monday  Pin Up
Feb. 16, Thursday  Desk Crits
Cultural Types: Leisure / Lina Bo Bardi SESC Pompeia Leisure Center, São Paulo, 1977–86
Readings:
“A Bowl of Soup for the People,” Lina Bo Bardi, Zeuler R. M. de A. Lima (Author), Barry Bergdoll (Foreword) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013)
Lina Bo Bardi: 100: Brazil's Alternative Path to Modernism
Lina Bo Bardi: The Theory of Architectural Practice Paperback Cathrine Veikos

Week 7: Feb. 20, Monday  Pin Up
Feb. 23, Thursday  Mid-Review
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Week 8: Feb. 27, Monday  Desk Crits

**Housing Types: Aging / Venturi Scott Brown / Guild House, Philadelphia, USA**

**Readings:**


March 2, Thursday  Desk Crits

Week 9: March 6, Monday  Desk Crits

**Office Types: Institutional / Dinkeloo Roche / Ford Foundation New York City**

**Readings:**


**March 9-11, Thursday -Saturday  Possible Travel Dates to Montreal (Alternative March 16-18)**

Week 10: March 13, Monday  Spring Break

Week 11: March 20, Monday  Pin Up

March 23, Thursday  Desk Crits

**Housing Types: Social / Sanna / Gifu Kitagata Apartment, Gifu, Japan + Women’s Dormitory**

**Readings:**

Assemblage_Kazuyo Sejima Stan Allen.pdf

Week 12: March 27, Monday  Pin Up

March 30, Thursday  Desk Crits

Week 13: April 3, Monday  Pin Up

April 6, Thursday  Studio Desk Crits + Walking Tour

**Housing Types: Luxury / Chelsea**

**Readings:**

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Week 14: April 10, Monday  Pin Up
        April 13, Thursday  Desk Crits

Week 15: April 17, Monday  Pin Up
        April 20, Thursday  Desk Crits

Week 16: April 24, 27  No Studio

Week 17: May 2, Tuesday  Final reviews + Final PDF due;
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Review Requirements

These requirements represent the minimum documentation required.

Drawings
- At a scale of 1/32"=1'-0": Site Plan with context.
- At a scale of 1/16"=1'-0" and 1/8"=1'-0": Plans with Ground Plan.
- At a scale of 1/16"=1'-0": Sections and Elevations.
- At a scale of ¼"=1'-0": Full Building Section with detail.

Models
- At a minimum scale of 1/64"=1'-0": Massing Model within urban context.
- At a scale of 1/16"=1'-0": Building Model with immediate site.
- At a scale of ½"=1'-0": Detail Model of your selection.

Perspectives

Conceptual Structural Diagrams
- Produce one [1] key structural diagram that reflects your structural concept and system. In addition, produce a series of diagrams that illustrate the structural strategy and its relationship to other qualities of the design, from materials to light and form.

Conceptual Daylighting Studies
- Produce one [1] unit that is presented through either digital or physical modeling to illustrate daylighting effects on June 21 and Dec. 21st at sunrise, noon, and sunset.

Post-Medium Specificity
- Produce one [1] drawing, model or 30 seconds of video that captures the essence of your project. This work shall be created to expand upon a theme or narrative of your project.

Additional Work
- Other work is also acceptable, and should further elaborate on your design concept. Wherever possible, do not repeat information. Please discuss with your individual critic.

Presentation and Time
- Part of studio culture includes balancing your studio work with other classes, both inside and outside of the School. Since this term is dedicated to work as part of a team, please be considerate of your teammate's time in addition to your own. Reviews are meant to be productive, useful, and critical of your work, providing insight and thus helping you move your project forward. Reviews are limited in time and therefore require that each student arrives on time and presents in a concise manner. All digital work should present a visually clear description of your project. Pin-ups are an opportunity for students to test their project with varying audiences. Mock up your presentation before any review.